

May 7, 2008

The Flight 93 National Memorial

Picture an open, windswept field
Roughly circular, shaped like a bowl
...a common field.

At the edge of that field, 40 heroes defeated terrorism on September 11, 2001,
Giving their lives selflessly, and
Changing that place to a field of honor, forever.

Suppose a friend or someone in your family lost a loved one,
How would you comfort them?
How would you give thanks to someone for a sacrifice they made for you?
We thought of an embrace.

What if 40 heroes rose up together, making the ultimate sacrifice for freedom,
Defending our nation's capital.
How would you honor their action?

We chose an embrace, a mile long,
through 40 memorial groves of trees found in western Pennsylvania.
We chose a gesture heroic in scale, fitting for the acts of the passengers and crew of
United Flight 93, and appropriate as a national memorial;
a national embrace encircling that field,
oriented to the sacred ground, the final resting place of 40 heroes.
Their names will be inscribed along the flight path where they chose to make a
difference.

Imagine your last contact with a loved one was a phone conversation.
You would remember their voice.
We chose to remember 40 voices in a tower
with chimes to carry their living memory, steadfast but ever changing in the wind.

The Flight 93 National Memorial will be a memorial landscape unique to this place of
history and commemorating the generous acts of courage by these 40 passengers and
crewmembers of Flight 93.

Paul Murdoch, Architect
Flight 93 National Memorial